

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is submitted with a Request for Continued Examination. Claims 1-4, 6-21, 23-60, and 62-75 are pending. Independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 46 and 57 have been amended to further distinguish the cited references. Claims 76-80 have been added. In view of the amendments to the claims and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims. It is believed that the pending claims define patentable subject matter over the references cited by the Examiner and notice to such effect is requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

The Examiner has maintained the rejections of Claims 1-4, 6-21, 23-60, and 62-75 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,738,159 to O'Brien ("O'Brien") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,487,875 to Shukat *et al.* ("Shukat"). In particular, the Examiner finds that there is a teaching or suggestion to modify O'Brien to provide a raisable window treatment that, when raised, forms only horizontal stacking pleats free of ballooning, billowing, and scalloping.

Although Applicants disagree with the rejection, independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 46 and 57 have been amended to further distinguish the cited references. In particular Claims 1, 19, 35, and 46 have been amended to recite that each pull cord passes through one row of vertically spaced guide elements from the bottom of the panel to the uppermost guide element, and is then guided to extend laterally across at least a portion of the panel at or near a top of the panel. For example, page 17, lines 12-15 and FIG. 1 disclose that the pull cords (13) may extend vertically from the bottom (22) of the panel (25) to the uppermost guide element (9) and then extend laterally across the panel.

In contrast, O'Brien only discloses that the cords (60, 88) extend vertically through vertical pockets or channels (62) but does not teach or suggest the cords are guided laterally across the liner (24). Rather, O'Brien simply discloses that each cord extends outwardly from the channels but is not guided in any particular manner other than vertically through the channels. Furthermore, Shukat discloses that each string (42, 43) extends vertically along the sheet member (14) and is configured to wrap circumferentially about the shade roller (30). As such, Shukat does not teach or suggest that the string is guided laterally across the sheet member.

In addition, independent Claim 57 has been amended to recite that the raisable panel further includes at least one pull cord coupled to the panel and configured to raise and lower the panel, at least one pulley for receiving the at least one pull cord and guiding the pull cord along the panel, and a locking mechanism for engaging the at least one pull cord to lock the panel in a vertically raised position and disengaging the pull cord to lower the panel. As shown in FIG. 1 of the present application, for example, the panel (25) includes a pair of pulleys (19, 21) for guiding each of the pull cords (13) across the panel and a locking mechanism (17) for engaging and disengaging each of the pull cords. Thus, the pull cords may extend in the same lateral direction and parallel to the top of the panel and may extend vertically downward proximate to one another such that a user could grasp each of the pull cords simultaneously.

Conversely, O'Brien only discloses that the drawstrings (60, 88) may be tied off when a desired elevation is achieved (see col. 6, lines 59-62). Moreover, Shukat discloses that each string (42, 43) wraps circumferentially about the shade roller (30), and that the roller may be secured in position using a pawl and ratchet mechanism (see col. 2, line 71 – col. 3, line 4). Thus, Shukat does not teach or suggest at least one pulley for guiding the strings along the sheet member and a locking mechanism configured to engage and disengage the strings.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that neither O'Brien nor Shukat, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests independent Claims 1, 19, 35, 46 and 57 and that the rejection under §103(a) is overcome. In addition, Applicants submit that each of the dependent claims depend from and further patentably distinguish a respective independent claim and are allowable for at least those reasons discussed above.

Furthermore, Applicants submit that several of the dependent claims are further distinguishable from the cited references. For example, none of the cited references teaches or suggests new Claims 76-80. Claim 76 recites that each pull cord extends laterally across at least a portion of the panel substantially parallel to the top of the panel. Claim 77 recites that a free end of each pull cord further extends vertically downward along the panel, while Claim 78 recites that each pull cord extends in the same lateral direction and vertically downward proximate to one another such that each of the pull cords may be pulled simultaneously. Claim 79 recites that the panel further includes at least one pulley for guiding at least one of the pull cords laterally across at least a portion of the panel, and Claim 80 recites that the panel includes a

self-locking mechanism configured to engage the pull cords and lock the panel in a vertically raised position. None of the cited references discloses new Claims 76-80.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, none of the cited references discloses the claimed invention. Accordingly, in view of the above differences between the Applicants' invention and the cited references, Applicants submit that the present invention, as defined by the pending claims, is patentable over the references cited in the Office Action. As such, for the reasons set forth above, Claims 1-4, 6-21, 23-60, and 62-80 are believed to be in condition for immediate allowance and notice to such effect is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest opportunity.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR §1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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